

Dear Educator,

September 17 is an important day in the history of the United States. The U.S. Constitution is the foundation of the government of the United States and the freedoms we as Americans enjoy today. It is critical that we not lose sight of that.

Constitution Day is a great opportunity for us to teach Idaho's students about this living document. We must commemorate this day and educate Idaho's students about the history, the importance and the current applications the U.S. Constitution has today.

Please use this pamphlet as a resource while preparing for Constitution Day at your school. Thank you for your continued dedication to the students in Idaho. Please contact the Idaho State Department of Education if you need further assistance.

Sincerely,



Tom Luna

Superintendent of Public Instruction



State Department of Education

Mr. Tom Luna  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
PO Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0027  
Phone: (208) 332-6800  
E-mail: [pgkavouras@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:pgkavouras@sde.idaho.gov)

State Department of Education

# CONSTITUTION DAY SEPTEMBER 17

*Instruction in the Constitution of the United States shall be given in all elementary and secondary schools.*

Idaho Code 33-1602



*Available Resources*

# Constitution Day

## September 17th

In 2004, the United States Congress passed Public Law 108-447, requiring that *"Each educational institution that receives Federal funds for a fiscal year shall hold an educational program on the United States Constitution on September 17 of such year for the students served by the educational institution."*

Idaho's legislators recognized the importance of understanding the United States Constitution as a living document and its impact in our everyday lives by adopting Idaho Code 33-1602, *"instruction in the Constitution of the United States shall be given in all elementary and secondary schools."*

Additionally, Idaho Code 73-108B identifies that *"September 17 shall be designated as constitutional commemorative day."*

The U.S. Department of Education announced in May 2005, that all local education agencies receiving federal funds, including NCLB and IDEA, must teach about the U.S. Constitution on September 17th of each year.

The following list of available resources may be useful in helping to design an instructional program for Constitution Day.

## Available Resources

The **Bill of Rights Institute** has developed a free package of educational and programming materials to help teachers observe Constitution Day. Lessons focus on the exceptional nature of the American Constitution and challenge students to reflect on the meaning of the Preamble.

[www.BillofRightsInstitute.org/ConstitutionDay](http://www.BillofRightsInstitute.org/ConstitutionDay)

The **Center for Civic Education**, in collaboration with the American Association of School Administrators, offers free lessons for grades K-12 to help teachers observe Constitution Day. Teachers can also download audio recordings of selected Constitution Day lessons.

[www.civiced.org/index.php?page=constitution\\_day](http://www.civiced.org/index.php?page=constitution_day)

**Constitutional Rights Foundation** provides programs and materials for teachers, students and citizens to learn about the importance of active participation in a democratic society.

<http://www.crf-usa.org/information.html>

**Constitutional Rights Foundation - Chicago** has designed and implemented a number of elementary and secondary law-related education programs. The site has a number of lessons in English and Spanish.

[www.crfc.org](http://www.crfc.org)

The **Idaho Secretary of State** provides instruction on how officials are elected and the importance of voting. The 2008 Idaho Student Mock Election provides an active voting experience for high school students across the state. For educators, an extensive list of teaching and internet resources is provided.

[www.sos.idaho.gov](http://www.sos.idaho.gov)

**Lawyers in the Classroom** encourages and prepares lawyers and teachers to work together to teach students about the law and citizen-ship. Attorneys are available to speak on Constitution Day. Contact Carey Shoufler LRE Program Director, Idaho Law Foundation, P.O. Box 895, Boise, ID 83701. Voice (208) 334-4500 or [cshoufler@isb.idaho.gov](mailto:cshoufler@isb.idaho.gov)

The **Library of Congress** is a repository for Constitutional documents and information and may be accessed at:

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/continental>

The **National Archives** has a website with a scan of the U.S. Constitution available at [http://www.archives.gov/national\\_archives\\_experience/charters/constitution.html](http://www.archives.gov/national_archives_experience/charters/constitution.html).

The **National Constitution Center** offers educational and programming materials to help schools organize events to commemorate Constitution Day. Materials are available at [www.constitutionday.us](http://www.constitutionday.us)

The **National History Education Clearinghouse** is designed to help K-12 teachers access resources and materials to improve U.S. history education in the classroom.

<http://teachinghistory.org>

**Smithsonian Institution**

The Smithsonian website is filled with a wealth of information on a large number of historical and cultural topics.

[www.si.edu](http://www.si.edu)